

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY, 5 JULY 2007 AT 9:30AM IN WATERSIDE TOWER, BELFAST

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

- Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
- (1) Ms Martina Anderson
- (3) Mr Tom Buchanan
- (2) Rt Hon Jeffrey Donaldson
- Mrs Dolores Kelly
- Mr Alex Maskey
- Mr Basil McCrea
- Mr Daithí McKay
- Ms Mary McKee
- Mrs Rosaleen Moore
- Mr Gearóid Ó hEára
- Mr Brian Rea
- (3) Mr Trevor Ringland
- Mr Suneil Sharma
- (3) Mr David Simpson
- Mr Peter Weir

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

- (4) Sir Hugh Orde (Chief Constable)
- (4) Mr Paul Leighton (Deputy Chief Constable)
- (4) Mrs Judith Gillespie (ACC Rural Region)
- (4) Mr Peter Sheridan (ACC Crime Operations)
- (4) Mr Alistair Finlay (ACC Crime Support)
- (4) Mr Roy Toner (ACC Operational Support)
- (4) Ms Sinead McSweeney (Director of Media and Communications)
- (4) Mr David Best (Director of Finance and Support Services)
- (4) Mr Joe Stewart (Director of Human Resources)
- (4) Chief Superintendent, Criminal Justice Department
- (4) T/Superintendent, Command Secretariat
- (4) 5 PSNI personnel

**OFFICIALS IN
ATTENDANCE:**

- (3) Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief Executive)
Dr Debbie Donnelly (Deputy Chief Executive)
Mr Sam Hagen (Director of Corporate Services)
Mr David Wilson (Director of Planning)
Mrs Sinead Simpson (Director of Policy)
3 Board Officials

- (1) Item number 3.1 to close
(2) Item number 3.3 to close
(3) Item numbers 1 to 9 and 16
(4) Item number 16 only

1. APOLOGIES, ETC

Apologies were received on behalf of Mr Barry Gilligan (Vice Chairman), Mr Leslie Cree and Mr David Rose. NOTED.

2. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE POLICING BOARD

Minutes Of The Policing Board Meeting Held On 6 June 2007

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That the draft minutes of the Policing Board meeting held on 6 June 2007 be approved.

2.2 Minutes Of The Policing Board Meeting In Public Held On 6 June 2007

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That the draft minutes of the Policing Board meeting in public held on 6 June 2007 be approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING

3.1 New Police College (Item 3.1.1 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chief Executive briefed Members on the content of discussion at recent meetings of the new College Programme Board and undertook to provide a background briefing on the project for Members. NOTED.

3.2 Historical Enquiries Team (Item 3.1.3 Of Minutes Refers)

Officials advised that a response had not yet been received from the NIO to the Board's letter of 30 March 2007 regarding the scope of the proposed review of the Historical Enquiries Team. Officials undertook to follow up on the provision of a reply from NIO. NOTED.

3.3 Meeting With The Chief Surveillance Inspector (Item 3.1.4 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with at item 14.1.

3.4 Request For An Inquiry By The Secretary Of State Under Section 44 Of The Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 (Item 3.1.6 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman referred Members to correspondence received from solicitors regarding an inquiry under Section 44 and advised that the matter would be included on the agenda for discussion with the Police Ombudsman at a future date. NOTED.

3.5 Schedule Of Board And Committee Meetings 2007 (Item 3.2.1 Of Minutes Refers)

This matter was dealt with at item 13.

3.6 RUC GC Foundation (Item 5.5 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman informed Members that he had nominated Mr Brian Rea and Mr Trevor Ringland for consideration by the Secretary of State as a Trustee of the Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross Foundation. NOTED.

3.7 District Policing Partnerships (Item 6 Of Minutes Refers)

The Deputy Chief Executive updated the Board on 2 recent meetings that had been held with the Chairpersons of District Policing Partnerships (DPPs). Members discussed the concern that had been expressed by a number of independent members of DPPs who would not be able to complete their full term of office following reconstitution. Members acknowledged the experience that the current independent members had gained, the uncertainty concerning their future and the considerable personal risks that had been faced by independent members. NOTED.

3.8 Senior Police Officer Appointments – Garda Siochana (Item 3.1.5 Of Minutes Refers)

Following a request for further information, a Member agreed to draft a question for the Chief Constable for the next Policing Board meeting regarding the level of contacts between the PSNI and the Garda Siochana.

4. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

4.1 Engagements

The Chairman highlighted the following engagements which he had undertaken on behalf of the Board:-

- Lord Mayor's Installation Dinner – City Hall, Belfast – 23 June 2007;
- Northern Ireland Criminal Justice Awards Ceremony 2007 – Belfast – 25 June 2007;
- International Strategic Leadership Programme – Belfast – 26 and 28 June 2007;
- The John Harris Memorial Lecture 2007 – London – 27 June 2007;
- Police Service Staff Briefing – Belfast – 28 June 2007;
- Summer Graduation Dinner – Queen's University, Belfast – 3 July 2007.

NOTED.

4.2 Publications

The Chairman highlighted the following publications that had been received:-

- Youths Causing Annoyance – Newtownabbey District Policing Partnership – March 2007;
- Chief Constable's Annual Report 2006 - 2007 – PSNI – June 2007;
- An Inspection of the Northern Ireland Prisoner Resettlement Strategy – Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland – June 2007.

NOTED.

4.3 Correspondence

The Chairman informed Members that the following correspondence that had been received:-

- letter dated 7 June 2007 from the Chairman of the Police Federation regarding the appointment of the Northern Ireland Policing Board 2007;

- letter dated 20 June 2007 from the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland regarding the discharge of a firearm at Mossvale Street, Belfast on 6 March 2006. The letter had been referred to the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee.

NOTED.

4.4 News Releases

The Chairman highlighted the following news releases:-

- announcement of new Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland – NIO – 26 June 2007;
- Al Hutchinson accepts the post of Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland – 26 June 2007.

NOTED.

4.5 Secondment Of A Chief Officer

The Chairman informed Members that the PSNI had received an official request for Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) McCausland to join a United States delegation to Iraq to assess the competence of local policing. Members were advised that the review would require the ACC to be away from his normal duties for 7 days and received details of the dates of his absence. Members were also advised of the arrangements being put in place by the Chief Constable to cover ACC McCausland's absence.

NOTED.

4.6 Organised Crime Task Force Information Seminar

The Chairman advised Members that an Organised Crime Task Force information seminar was being arranged for 11 September 2007 in Londonderry/Derry and that all Board Members would be invited to attend. The target audience will be the North West DPPs, business representatives and, possibly, representatives from the Donegal

business community. It is planned to provide Members with further details once these have been agreed. NOTED.

4.7 Whiterock Parade

The Chairman referred to the policing operation associated with the parade in the Whiterock Road area of North Belfast on 30 June 2007. Following the Chairman's attendance at the PSNI "Gold Room" to observe part of the period of the parade, he raised an issue of concern with Members and sought their support to arrange a meeting with the Chairman of the Parades Commission and PSNI.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To support the arrangement of a meeting between the Chairman of the Board, the Chairman of the Parades Commission and PSNI.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

There were no matters arising.

6. CORPORATE POLICY, PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

6.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee held on 21 June 2007

The Chairman of the Committee highlighted the following matters considered by the Committee and outlined Committee discussions/recommendations:-

6.1.1 Briefings On Crime Operations Issues (Item 5.5 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman referred Members to a recommendation from the Committee for a continuation of the existing arrangements for briefings to the Board on Crime Operations issues. The Chairman also referred Members to a paper, tabled at the meeting, which had been put to the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee detailing the current mechanism, which while not formally laid down had become custom and practice over the last few years.

A Member expressed concern that the paper had not been forwarded to Members who were not on the Committee in advance of the Board meeting. The Chief Executive informed Members that this was due to administrative oversight and apologised.

A few Members suggested that the current mechanism for briefings did not offer sufficient transparency on accountability and recommended that other mechanisms should be considered.

A number of Members indicated their confidence in the current mechanism and recommended that this be retained.

The Sinn Fein Members recorded their party's opposition to the mechanism.

Following a show of hands, it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the mechanism which comprises:-

- private briefings between ACC Crime Operations and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board on an ad hoc basis, as deemed necessary by either party;
- private briefing, bi-annually of Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee (to which all Board Members are invited) by ACC Crime

Operations, supported by the Director of the Security Services in Northern Ireland attending one of these meetings;

- public briefings of the full Board, as deemed appropriate by either the Board or PSNI on Crime Operations related issues;

should continue for a further period of 2 years, at which point it would be reviewed to assess whether it remains fit for purpose.

It was noted that any agreed enhancements to the mechanism could take place in advance of the review in 2 years time.

6.1.2 NIPB Corporate Plan 2008 – 2011 (Item 8 Of Minutes Refers)

6.1.3 Allocation Of Special Responsibility Allowance (Item 12 Of Minutes Refers)

6.1.4 Terminology For Office Bearers (Item 13 Of Minutes Refers)

The Board adopted the recommendations made by the Committee:-

- that the Board should move to adopt the gender neutral terminology of “Chairperson” and “Vice Chairperson” when referring to that office;
- that where the individual appointed to such office is female, then the incumbent could ask to be referred to as “chair” or “chairperson” as they deem acceptable and this title would be used in the minutes of the meeting;
- that where the individual appointed to such offices is male, then the incumbent can ask to be referred to as “Chairman”, “Chair” or “Chairperson” as they deem acceptable and this title would be used in the minutes of the meeting.

In addition, the Board:-

RESOLVED:

- that where the individual appointed to such office is female, then the incumbent could ask to be referred to as “Chairwoman”, “Chair” or “Chairperson” as they deem acceptable and this title would be used in the minutes of the meeting.

6.1.5 News Releases (item 5.4 Of Minutes Refers)

A Member referred to a news release issued by the Board on 16 June 2007. Following discussion about the press release and perusal of the statement, the Member indicated that his query had been resolved.

6.1.6 Conduct Of Senior Officer Regulations 2000 (Item 21.2 Of Minutes Refers)

A Member raised an issue of policy arising from a complaint against a senior police officer. The Chief Executive advised that the matter had been raised with the Chief Constable and the Police Ombudsman and that he would report back to the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee concerning the matter. NOTED.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the draft minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee held on 21 June 2007.

6.2 Research Support For Political Members Of The Board

The Board considered a recommendation from the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee that the political parties represented on the Board should be provided with research support to assist them to carry out their duties as Board Members.

Following discussion, it was:-

RESOLVED:

- to make a submission to the Secretary of State requesting the provision of research support to assist the political Members of the Board in carrying out their duties as Board Members;
- that the amount of allowances proposed should be put forward as a basis for discussion;
- that if the payments under any scheme are to be made through the Board, to request an increase in the Board's budget to fully cover the additional costs.

Independent Members highlighted their similar needs for support and the Chairman undertook to reflect on this matter.

6.3 Policing Board Meetings In Public – Questions From Members Of The Public Attending Board Meetings/Location And Timing Of Meetings

The Board considered a paper containing recommendations from the Corporate Policy, Planning and Performance Committee on the handling of questions from the public at the monthly 'in public' sessions of Board meetings; the locations of Board meetings in public for 2007/08; and the timings of meetings in public.

Following discussion, it was:-

RESOLVED:

- to hold one or 2 public meetings in each year to take questions from members of the public and listen to community concerns and views on policing; and where possible, link the meetings to engage the public on key Board work programmes e.g. the development of the Corporate Plan;

- that the next meeting location outside Waterside Tower should be in the East (venue to be confirmed) in the autumn 2007 and in Newry in February 2008;
- that one or 2 evening meetings should be held within the next year, the private session starting at 4pm and the Board meeting in public from 7 – 8:30pm; and
- that the new arrangements should be introduced on a pilot basis and reviewed after a period of operation.
- that the co-operation of the Chief Constable be sought in participating in such public meetings.

During discussion, Members noted that the revised arrangements would exclude members of the public from putting questions at the monthly Board meeting in public, either directly from the public gallery or in writing via a Board Member and that questions from the public would be taken at the one or 2 public meetings held each year. However, members of the public could still contact Board Members regarding issues of concern. NOTED.

Mrs Kelly recorded her opposition to this arrangement and asked that it be recorded that she favoured allocating a portion of each Board meeting in public to questions from members of the public.

7. AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

7.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Audit And Risk Management Committee Held On 22 June 2007

The Chairman of the Committee highlighted the following matters considered by the Committee and outlined the Committee discussions/recommendations:-

7.1.1 Presentations Regarding Corporate Governance, Internal Audit And External Audit (Item 5 Of Minutes Refers)

7.1.2 Northern Ireland Policing Board Internal Audit 2007 – 2008 Periodic Work Plan (Item 7 Of Minutes Refers)

7.1.3 Northern Ireland Policing Board's Risk Management Policy And Corporate And Directorate Risk Registers (Item 8.1 Of Minutes Refers)

7.1.4 Status Report On Ballynahinch CCTV Scheme (Item 8.2 Of Minutes Refers)

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the draft minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee held on 22 June 2007.

8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

8.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Community Engagement Committee Meeting Held On 14 June 2007

The Chairman of the Committee highlighted the following matters considered by the Committee and outlined the Committee discussions/recommendations:-

8.1.1 First Day Briefing (Item 5 Of Minutes Refer)

8.1.2 Progress Report On Implementation Of The Board's Community Engagement Strategy (Item 6 Of Minutes Refers)

8.1.3 Reconstitution Of District Policing Partnerships (Item 7 Of Minutes Refers)

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the draft minutes of the meeting of the Community Engagement Committee held on 14 June 2007.

8.2 Board Members Links With District Policing Partnerships

The Board considered a paper regarding the provision of a link role between Members and District Policing Partnerships.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That Members should provide a link role with District Policing Partnerships.

8.3 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual And Trans-Sexual (LGBT) Reference Group

The Board noted that the first meeting of the LGBT Reference Group would be held in Belfast on 26 July 2007 at 6.30pm. Any Member wishing to attend the meeting was asked to contact Secretariat who would make the necessary arrangements. NOTED.

9 HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

9.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Human Resources Committee Meeting Held On 13 June 2007

The Chairman of the Committee highlighted the following matters considered by the Committee and outlined the Committee discussions/recommendations:-

9.1.1 Human Resources Planning Strategy (Item 6 Of Minutes Refers)

9.1.2 NIO Policing Division Circular 6/2007– Guidance Regarding The Role Of The Selected Medical Practitioner And The Independent Medical Referee In The Consideration And Review Of Injury On Duty (Item 11 Of Minutes Refers)

9.1.3 Training, Education And Development Programme (Item 16 Of Minutes Refers)

In response to questions from a Member, the Deputy Chief Executive updated the Board on the Committee's discussions regarding the involvement of a Member on the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) Tripartite Working Group, and undertook to provide the Board with details of the timescale for appointment of the PCSOs.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the draft minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 13 June 2007.

9.2 Police Support Staff (Suitability) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007

The Board considered a paper regarding recommendations from the Human Resources Committee in relation to a request from NIO for any final views from the Board in relation to the draft Police Support Staff (Suitability) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.

It was:-

AGREED:

- that NIO should be asked to extend the deadline for receipt of the Board's views on the Police Support Staff (Suitability) Regulations.
- that additional information should be obtained regarding the new legislation concerning recruitment of people with conflict related conditions.
- that all Board Members should be invited to submit views on the Regulations for consideration at the August 2007 Human Resources Committee meeting.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That delegated authority should be given to the Human Resources Committee to sign off on the Board's views on the draft regulations at its August 2007 meeting.

10 HUMAN RIGHTS AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING

10.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Human Rights And Professional Standards Committee Held On 14 June 2007

The Chairman of the Committee highlighted the following matters considered by the Committee and outlined the Committee discussions/recommendations:-

10.1.1 AEP And Child Impact Issues (Item 3.3 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairman advised the Board that a full briefing on Attenuated Energy Projectiles and child impact issues would be given to the Board, following some concerns which had been raised by Members at a meeting with PSNI and the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People on 14 June 2007. Following discussion, it was agreed that this full briefing should be provided to the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee.

10.1.2 NIO Strategic Review Of Parading (Item 4.4 Of Minutes Refers)

10.1.3 Appointment To Outside Bodies And Lead Members (Item 7 Of Minutes Refers)

10.1.4 Presentation – Proposal To Introduce TASER To The Police Service Of Northern Ireland (Item 8 Of Minutes Refers)

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the draft minutes of the meeting of the Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee held on 14 June 2007.

10.2 PSNI Plans To Introduce TASER – Progress Report

The Board noted a progress report on the PSNI plans to introduce TASER. NOTED.

11 RESOURCES AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

11.1 Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Resources And Improvement Committee Held On 15 June 2007

The Chairperson of the Committee highlighted the following matters considered by the Committee and outlined Committee discussions/recommendations:-

11.1.1 Presentation – PSNI Best Value Review Of Partnerships (Item 3.2 Of Minutes Refers)

11.1.2 PSNI Draft Annual Financial Statements 2006 – 2007 (Item 7 Of Minutes Refers)

The Chairperson highlighted that there had been a change to the PSNI Draft Annual Financial Statements 2006 – 2007 since the meeting of the Committee and details would be reported to the next meeting. NOTED.

11.1.3 Presentation – Implementation Of The PSNI Estate Strategy – June 2007 Update (Item 8 Of Minutes Refers)

11.1.4 Presentation – Call Management (Item 10 Of Minutes Refers)

11.1.5 Compensation Information – March 2007 (Item 12 Of Minutes Refers)

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To adopt the draft minutes of the meeting of the Resources and Improvement Committee held on 15 June 2007.

12 MEMBERSHIP OF BOARD COMMITTEES

The Board considered a paper regarding amendments to the membership of Board Committees, previously agreed at the Board meeting held on 31 May 2007.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

- to appoint a Member to replace Ms McKee on the Human Resources Committee; and
- appoint an additional Member(s) to serve on the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

Any Member interested in appointment to either Committee was asked to contact the Chief Executive. Contact would be made with a Member not in attendance at the meeting to ascertain interest in serving on the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

13 SCHEDULE OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2007

The Board considered a revised draft programme of Board and Committee meeting dates for the period July to December 2007.

It was:-

RESOLVED:

To approve the proposed programme of Board and Committee meetings for July to December 2007.

It was:-

AGREED:

To retain a provisional date of 2 August 2007 for a Board meeting, should there be an urgent requirement during that month.

14 INFORMATION PAPERS

14.1 Role Of The Northern Ireland Policing Board – Oversight Of Covert Policing Matters

The Board noted an information paper in relation to the Board's oversight role in respect of covert policing matters.

A Member referred to the Terms of Reference for the Assembly and Executive Review Committee and suggested that similar protocols to those being discussed by this Committee be considered by the Board in respect of sensitive information.

The Chairman undertook to consider the suggestion.

14.2 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Group Action

The Board considered a paper which briefly summarised the content of the generic judgement handed down by Mr Justice Coughlin, on 29 June 2007, concerning group litigation by former and serving members of the RUC and PSNI claiming psychological/psychiatric disorder following exposure to trauma experienced during the course of the terrorist campaign in Northern Ireland. NOTED.

15 COMMUNICATION ISSUES

There were no matters arising.

16 QUESTIONS TO THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

The Chairman welcomed the Chief Constable and other PSNI representatives to the meeting.

The Board received further information in relation to:-

- PSNI policy regarding the investigation of criminal investigations relating to historic criminal offences;
- PSNI policy to neither confirm nor deny the identity of covert human intelligence sources;
- a police investigation regarding a named individual;
- a PSNI operation concerning the protection of the elderly from intimidation and extortion.

The Board then moved into public session and following the Board meeting in public the PSNI representatives left the meeting.

17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17.1 Tabled Papers

A number of Members expressed concern regarding the tabling of late papers at Board and Committee meetings, which gave insufficient time for Members to fully consider their content. Officials undertook to review the current system and to endeavour to keep the number of tabled papers to a minimum.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was arranged for 6 September 2007 at 9:30am.

(Meeting closed 3:05pm).

Secretariat

July 2007

Chairman